



Brian Schweitzer, Governor

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September 16, 2005

RE: Scoping Report on the Highwood Power Generation and Transmission Project

Dear Reader:

Enclosed you will find a copy of the State of Montana's Scoping Report on the Highwood Power Generation and Transmission Project. This document summarizes the State of Montana's scoping efforts for this project. This document is set up to supplement the scoping summary report prepared by USDA, Rural Utilities Services (RUS) in March 2005. That document is available for public review on the RUS website at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>.

Some members of the public were concerned that they wouldn't be allowed to provide scoping comments on the state permit applications to be submitted by Southern Montana Electric. DEQ will provide additional 30-day scoping comment periods after major permit applications, such as the air quality, Montana Pollution Discharge Elimination System (MPDES), and solid waste permit applications, are submitted to DEQ. Those review and comment periods will run concurrently with initial staff reviews of those applications. Substantive comments will be incorporated into the draft EIS.

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact me at the above address or at 406-444-1760.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Johnson